

For Immediate Release

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Legislation will extend unemployment benefits for thousands in NJ-13

Washington, D.C. – Today, Congressman Sires supported the extension of unemployment benefits, which passed the House by a vote of 331 - 83. H.R. 3548, the Unemployment Compensation Extension Act of 2009, will continue unemployment benefits for an additional 13 weeks for workers in states where the overall unemployment rate averages 8.5% or more over the last three months.

“Last month, unemployment rose to 9.7 percent in New Jersey, and more than 25,000 unemployed workers began to exhaust their unemployment benefits in Hudson, Essex, Middlesex, and Union counties” said Sires. “With roughly one job opening for every five job seekers, this legislation is critical to bridge the gap for these unemployed workers as the economy begins to recover and more jobs are created.”

In the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress extended the termination date of employment benefits through the end of the year along with other provisions to help stimulate the economy, create jobs, and help the unemployed. However, the National Employment Law Project estimates over half a million people will exhaust their unemployment benefits by the end of September and nearly 1.5 million will run out by the end of the year.

“The House moved quickly to get this legislation to the floor to help hardworking Americans who are struggling to find employment. American workers are the backbone of our economy, and we must work to support them in a difficult job market. I was proud to be a cosponsor of this legislation and to vote for the bill, and I encourage the Senate to move this legislation quickly to help our workers in New Jersey and across the country.”

H.R. 3548 now awaits Senate action.

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